

Message Text

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R 122021Z MAR 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055456

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEATS ISLAMABAD 1829 ACTION DEPT KABUL
INFO NEW DELHI TEHRAN LONDON MAR 3RD

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1829

EMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF
SUBJECT: MESSAGE FOR SECRETARY FROM BHUTTO

1. AT AIRPORT CEREMONY YESTERDAY IN CONNECTION WITH ARRIVAL
ON AUSTRALIAN GOVERNOR GENERAL KERR, AGHA SHAHI TOLD ME
THAT BHUTTO HAD ALREADY GIVEN FAVORABLE RESPONSE DIRECTLY
TO THE SECRETARY ON SUBJECT OF HIS RECENT MESSAGE ON SUBJECT
OF CESSATION OF PROPAGANDA WHICH INCREASES TENSIONS BETWEEN
AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN. I HAVE THIS MORNING RECEIVED
BHUTTO'S REPLY, WHICH IS REPORTED HEREIN FOR THE BENEFIT
OF KABUL AND OTHER ADDRESSEES. BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR MR. SECRETARY:
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I HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH AMBASSADOR BYROADE YOUR MESSAGE

ABOUT CESSATION OF RADIO BROADCASTS BY AFGHANISTAN
AND PAKISTAN AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS REDUCING TENSIONS
AND INITIATING A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

WE HAVE EXERCISED CONSIDERABLE RESTRAINT IN THE
FACE OF GRAVE PROVOCATIONS ON THE PART OF AFGHANISTAN.
AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, FOR WEEKS BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION
OF MY CLOSE AND TRUSTED COLLEAGUE MINISTER SHERPAO, KABUL
RADIO WAS BROADCASTING THREAT TO HIS LIFE. THE AFGHAN
GOVERNMENT IS THEREFORE IN NO POSITION TO EVADE ITS OWN
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRAGEDY.

NEVERTHELESS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT YOUR COUNSEL
TO BOTH SIDES TO FIND A WAY TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT
OF THEIR DIFFERENCES, AND PROMPTED BY OUR OWN GENUINE
DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE WITH AFGHANISTAN, WE
ARE PREPARED TO CONTROL OUR RADIO BROADCASTS IF AFGHANISTAN
DOES THE SAME. I ENTIRELY AGREE WITH YOU THAT A CESSATION
OF BROADCASTS WHICH INCREASE TENSIONS IS ESSENTIAL FOR
THE CREATION OF AN ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE TO A CONSTRUCTIVE
DIALOGUE BETWEEN US AND AFGHANISTAN. WE ARE PREPARED
TO TAKE THIS STEP ON A BASIS OF RECIPROCITY FROM ANY
MUTUALLY AGREEABLE DATE. WARMEST PERSONAL REGARDS,
ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO. END QUOTE.

2. I HAVE BEEN A BIT CONCERNED ABOUT THIS EXERCISE,
DESPITE THE VERY ADMIRABLE AND SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS OF
SENATOR PERCY WHICH CULMINATED IN APPARENT AGREEMENT
IN NEPAL WHICH CALLED FOR CESSATION OF THESE ACTIVITIES
AS OF MARCH 1. MY FIRST CONCERN WAS THAT, BY MUTUAL
AGREEMENT WITH BHUTTO, THE PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN NEVER,
REPEAT NEVER, BECOMES INVOLVED OR TAKES RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ANY MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS. MY FIRST REACTION, THEREFORE, WAS THAT BHUTTO
MIGHT BE CHAGRINED OVER THE WAY MATTERS PROCEEDED AND THAT
MIGHT AFFECT HIS ACTION. IT WOULD APPEAR NOW THAT THIS
CONCERN WAS UNFOUNDED.

3. MY SECOND CONCERN WAS BECAUSE OF THE TIME ELEMENT.
I DO NOT KNOW IN WHAT DETAIL BHUTTO MAY HAVE BEEN BRIEFED
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BY RETURNING PRESIDENT WHO WENT STRAIGHT TO LARKANA ON
FEBRUARY 26. I DO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT THE OFFICIAL REPORT
OF THE RETURNING DELEGATION AS REGARDS THE TALKS IN NEPAL
DID NOT REACH SHAHI IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE FOR ITS CONSIDERATION
UNTIL VERY LATE AT NIGHT ON FEBRUARY 28. WHEN I SUPPLEMENTED
THE CONTENTS OF THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE THE NEXT MORNING
WITH REMARK TO SHAHI THAT THE TWO SIDES HAD AGREED IN
NEPAL UPON AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF MARCH 1, HE WAS MUCH

SURPRISED AND CONCERNED AS IT WAS OF COURSE ALREADY MARCH 1. EFFECTIVE ACTION BY BHUTTO TO GET THE WORD TO ALL THE MANY SOURCES HERE WHO NORMALLY SPEAK FREELY AND PUBLICLY ON MATTERS RELATING TO AFGHANISTAN WOULD OF COURSE TAKE SOME TIME IN ITSELF. I WOULD ASSUME THAT BHUTTO RECEIVED THE WORD ABOUT MARCH 1 FROM SHAHI, IF IN FACT HE DID NOT GET IT FROM THE PRESIDENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE LAST SENTENCE OF BHUTTO'S REPLY WHICH MENTIONS "ANY MUTUALLY AGREEABLE DATE" WOULD SEEM TO LEAVE THINGS UP IN THE AIR FROM THIS SIDE AS FAR AS AGREEMENT ON A DATE IS CONCERNED BETWEEN US AND THE TWO PARTIES INVOLVED. IN RETROSPECT IT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN BETTER TO SET A DATE WHICH WOULD HAVE GIVEN BOTH SIDES, SAY PERHAPS A WEEK, TO GET OUT THE WORD AND GET THEIR HOUSES IN ORDER, ALTHOUGH GIVEN THE DIFFERENCES IN THE NATURE OF THEIR SOCIETIES, I SUPPOSE IT WOULD TAKE LONGER HERE THAN IN AFGHANISTAN.

4. I WILL BE SEEING BHUTTO AS SOON AS FEASIBLE AFTER DEPARTURE OF THE CURRENT STATE VISITOR. IN THE MEANTIME WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION OF RESPONSE OF DAOD TO THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE. DEPENDING UPON THAT RESPONSE, WE MAY HAVE A DECISION TO MAKE AS TO WHETHER TO WORK TOWARDS A NEW MUTUALLY AGREEABLE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERCY INITIATIVE . THE GOAL I WOULD THINK, IF ACHIEVABLE, WOULD BE FOR BOTH SIDES TO ARRIVE AT A MUTUALPA AGREEABLE DATE THROUGH THEIR OWN CHANNELS WHILE BEING PREPARED, IF NECESSARY, TO DO MORE THAN THIS IN ORDER NOT TO SEE THIS INITIATIVE FAIL.

BYROADOE

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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